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GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.

SPEECH

OF

HON. N. B. SCOTT,

OF WEST VIRGINIA,

IN THE

SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

Tuesday, June 5, 1900.

WASHINGTON.

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GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.

Mr. SCOTT. I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate Senate bill 2355.

The Senate, as in Committee of the Whole, resumed the consideration of the bill (S. 2355) in relation to the suppression of insurrection in, and to the government of, the Philippine Islands, ceded by Spain to the United States by the treaty concluded at Paris on the 10th day of December, 1898.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I desire to detain the Senate but a few minutes, not to exceed thirty, to offer a few remarks on the bill now before the Senate.

Mr. President, when we consider the magnitude of the question now under consideration, the fact that, independent of the 75,000,000 people of this country, some 10,000,000 other peoples now subject to our dominion and control are interested, we can readily account for the many conflicting views presented. If, however, we but realize that we are not confronted with a mere theoretical question of government, but an actual existing state of affairs, and one which, whether desirable or undesirable, pleasant or unpleasant, we are forced to meet, there should be no serious difference as to our duty in the premises. It will serve no good purpose to discuss what should or ought to have been done. That belongs to the past. It is to the present that we should address ourselves.

It will not be out of place, however, in reaching an intelligent conclusion as to our present and future duty, to reflect for a moment on the circumstances leading to our present relations with the Philippine Islands. Why are we confronted with the problem at all? Was it one of our own seeking or one legitimately thrust

upon us? Americans are familiar with the facts leading up to and forcing this country to declare war against the Spanish Government. Not only did Spain violate her plainest duty to her own people, but right at our door caused and permitted such cruel outrages to be committed as to shock the civilized world and make it our manifest duty, in the interest of those cruelly oppressed, to intercede in their behalf. No other nation could properly have intervened, and the Christian people of every country, with practical unanimity, demanded that the barbarity and cruelty then being practiced should be brought at once to an end.

This shocking condition was of long standing and our action can not be said to have been hastily taken. Every reasonable means was exhausted before resort to arms was had; appeals were made, warnings given, postponements had, looking to a changed condition of affairs, but all to no purpose. After exhausting every effort to change these conditions, matters apparently grew worse, until our own battle ship, lawfully within a Spanish harbor, was destroyed and the lives of hundreds of our brave seamen lost. That war naturally resulted is what might have been expected. The justice of that war is no more questioned than that its success was complete and overwhelming. As the result, our present relations in reference to Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines arise.

Whatever limitations exist as to the title and sovereignty of this Government over Cuba arise solely from the declared purposes embodied in the declaration of war. In the absence of such conditions, no one could be found to controvert the fact that the result of this war, short and decisive as it was, gave to this country undisputed sovereignty over Cuba. That we shall faithfully carry out our pledges as a nation in that regard I doubt not; but the fact that the condition exists as to the island, on account of which the conflict arose, but emphasizes the fact that as to any other territory or property of the vanquished power our title is complete and our authority supreme. Porto Rico and the Philippines belong to us as the legitimate result of conquest.

There is no doubt of the right of a nation to acquire property by conquest. So manifestly plain is this that those who make the contrary contention as to the Philippines are forced to ac-

knowledge the very reverse as to Porto Rico. Surely if by conquest we lawfully hold Porto Rico, doubly clear must be our right and title to the Philippines, which we acquired both by conquest and purchase. The Philippines were a part of the Spanish possessions and under the dominion and control of that Government. They were among Spain's ancient possessions, and while it is true, as in Cuba, rebellion may have existed against the Government of Spain on some portions of the archipelago, still it was as much a part and parcel of the Spanish domain as was Cuba or any other of its colonies.

For this reason those conducting the war on the part of our Government at once selected Manila as a legitimate point of attack against the Spanish, and when the electric flash told the world of Dewey's magnificent victory, no one doubted upon whom the American guns had fired and whose possessions were thereby imperiled. Spain quickly realized the complete and overwhelming victory we had won, and did not seriously controvert our claim of title when asserted. To pretend that because in certain of the provinces a state of disorder existed we are not entitled to claim the legitimate result of our victory, is an insult to intelligence and a lack of appreciation of the valorous deeds of those who, by their gallantry and fortitude, won one of the greatest naval victories in the world's history. I do not think that I mistake the sentiment of the people of this country when I predict that they will never consent to take a step backward in this important contest: to surrender a single advantage gained, or lower the Stars and Stripes where the American soldiers and sailors have placed them.

One thing at least is settled. The islands are the territory of the United States: they have been lawfully acquired, and no power disputes the fact of our conquest, the legality of our purchase, or the right of our possession. They will remain ours until abandoned by Congress or wrested from us by others. Those who differ with me on this subject have at least one satisfaction, that if it shall be found to be wise to surrender that which we hold as the result of conquest and purchase, we will have no difficulty in finding possibly a less conservative, but certainly a more progressive, nation anxious and ready to take up what we throw away.

Mr. President, in arriving at a determination of what should be our policy regarding these islands we are confronted by two propositions—what as a people we owe to the Filipinos themselves and what we owe to other nations.

Is it possible that we are so fortunately situated in our present relations with the Philippine Islands as not to have assumed some duty, or to have incurred some responsibility, due alike to the people of the islands and to the other nations of the earth? We would, indeed, be in a strange condition to find ourselves thus circumstanced. Such a thing would be unprecedented; and to suppose that the condition exists is merely imaginary. To thus lull our consciences would make us a set of dreamers, failing to appreciate our real responsibilities and obligations. As victors we owe a duty to the vanquished.

Does anyone doubt that the intelligent classes of the inhabitants of these islands, those largely owning the property, those heretofore responsible for the conduct of the government, were Spanish or Spanish sympathizers? Does anyone doubt that between these and the insurrectionary element in the archipelago the bitterest state of feeling existed and now exists? Shall this large and responsible class be ignored? Are they to be left unprotected from the revolutionists, who have attempted to hold the islands under subjection, or should this Government be true to itself and discharge its plainest and simplest duty of seeing that full protection to life, limb, and property is accorded to all, and particularly to those upon whom, to the present time, the control of the government has been cast? Precisely the same condition, except possibly more intensified, exists as to the better and the more intelligent of the natives, who are and have been loyal to the United States.

For us to fail in the discharge of our duty to this class and leave them to the tender mercies of the lawless horde, which threatens to crush them down as the result of our overturning the existing government and because of their faithfulness to us, would be a crime second only to the cruelties on the part of the Spanish Government in Cuba that brought about our intervention. It is, in effect, what we were urged to do by many, whose enthusiasm apparently blinded their judgment as to Cuba at the beginning of

the strife; but it is now manifest that to have acknowledged the independence of the Cubans would have been the height of folly.

Yet, some Senators say, Mr. President, that we must give up the Philippines to Aguinaldo and his followers and let them do as they will, reckoning them as fit to establish government and promote peace and order throughout the archipelago. What stupendous folly! What height of blindness! Is it possible that they have studied the acts and doings of these marauders? Are they conversant with their conduct at the taking of Manila? If so, they must know that it took all the efforts of the American Army to restrain these outlaws from sacking and looting the city, and instead of aiding our soldiers to carry the city, they retarded them seriously in their operations. Their sole idea of war seems to be the enriching of themselves at the cost of the vanquished. Professor Worcester, of the late Philippine Commission, in a speech before the Hamilton Club of Chicago last November, after reviewing some of the outrages perpetrated by the Filipinos upon their own countrymen, says:

In Cavite province, just south of Manila, the insurgent troops had robbed the inhabitants of the principal towns, and had committed very numerous assaults on women. One of their generals had established a regular seraglio, and had flatly refused to obey the orders of his superior officer. The natives of the province were calling the insurgent troops by the name commonly applied to the mythical being popularly supposed to breed the cholera. Men were constantly coming in from the important towns begging us to advance our lines, drive out the insurgents, and give them protection. I have chosen these two provinces because I personally received almost daily reports of conditions there, and know whereof I speak. They were by no means exceptional.

In southern Luzon the Bicolis had risen up against the Tagalogs at several points and were asking for help. The Tagalog general, Lucban, had extorted some \$200,000 from the inhabitants of Samar and Leyte and had put it into his pocket. The people of Hohol were calling for aid. The Moros and the insurgents had fallen to fighting each other in Mindanao, where we had not landed a man. Tomas Aguinaldo, an insurgent official and cousin of the dictator, had gone to Mamburao, on the west coast of Mindoro, and had there organized a genuine piratical expedition, with the avowed object of plundering the peaceable inhabitants of the Calamianes Islands, Palawan, Masbate, Sibuyan, and Romblon. This plan had been carried out and he had returned to Mamburao heavily laden with plunder. * * * I could go on indefinitely with illustrations, but I believe that those given will suffice.

Now, Mr. President, are such people the ones to whom the destinies and happiness of 10,000,000 of human beings should be intrusted? I admit that those who so contend are differently constituted from myself. In addition to such lawless acts as

those depicted by Professor Worcester, if we turn the islands over to these insurrectionists, we will see internal strife drench the archipelago with blood. Three distinct races exist in the islands, divided into numerous tribes, all opposed to each other. Aguinaldo and his followers are of the Malayan race and almost entirely of the Tagalog tribe, which numbers about a million and a half of people, while the Visayas of the same race number more than two millions and a half. From all the evidence obtainable, it seems that these tribes are deadly enemies and the authority of Dictator Aguinaldo and his followers would be resisted to the last degree. It is hard to see why men will continue to demand the surrender of these islands with such conditions only too plainly apparent.

This, Mr. President, is but a brief summary of our duty to the islanders, but in a larger and more comprehensive sense obligations, international in character, arise that we ought not to escape if we could and could not if we would. The moment that Dewey's victory at Manila was announced it was known that Spanish dominion and authority in that part of its territory was virtually at an end, and other nations had the right to look to us for the assumption of governmental control of the islands. If these duties and responsibilities did not then arise, certainly they did thereafter when Spain formally ceded to us this territory. To say that we should not have gone there, that we have no right there now, that it is contrary to the fundamental principles of this Government, is to beg the whole question. We did go there, and we were there as the result of the declaration of war against the power that then owned the islands, and we went there because we believed it to be a point where we could successfully meet the enemy. The result has proved the wisdom of the course taken. And now, having succeeded, it can not be that we are under no obligations to anyone by reason of the position in which we find ourselves.

It is true that we have the right arbitrarily to leave—to abandon the territory—and give up all that we have acquired, and, in fact, apologize for what we have done. But who would advocate such a policy? Is there anyone who sincerely believes that this is the proper thing to do? It would make our country the laughingstock of the world and do more to discount the prestige that

we have won by our magnificent victories on land and sea than anything else that has ever happened or can happen. The serious consequences which might arise from a contest among other nations, whose envious eyes are upon the islands, alike to the archipelago and the countries involved, can not be foreseen.

Is it the duty of America to remain isolated on the Western Hemisphere and confine her works to this continent? No. Under the influence of her glorious example nearly every country on the Western Hemisphere has shaken off monarchical rule and stands to-day numbered with the independent republics of the world. Now that her mission here is virtually ended, shall she sit supinely and heed not the cries of the needy when under her own control elsewhere? Shall we act the part of the slothful servant in the parable of the talents? Many are our opportunities and much the work to be done, and we must not pause before our duty.

It is idle to discuss this question from the standpoint that all who favor the retention of these islands aim a blow at liberty and attempt to subvert the glorious doctrine of the immortal Declaration of Independence. For my part, I shall not, in considering this question, take any position contrary to the letter and spirit of that great instrument. In what respect, allow me to ask, does the retention of the Philippines violate its cardinal truths? I can see no argument in such bald contentions. When the hopelessness of a cause becomes apparent, its advocates grasp at anything that will sustain them for a moment. They know that the burning words which Jefferson wrote in 1776 are revered by all American citizens, and hope by a great hue and cry to excite people into the belief that they are being departed from. I rest secure my views in the spirit of that remarkable instrument, for it is to save the inhabitants of the Philippine Archipelago from endless war and all its kindred evils, to rescue them from the hand of a heartless and self-imposed dictator and his avaricious followers, and to assure to them the benefits of free government and the blessings of peace, happiness, and contentment that I will vote for the bill introduced by the Senator from Wisconsin when it shall come before the Senate.

Thus far I have only dealt with the humane side of this question and what our duty to these islands should be. Can it be

doubted that this enlightened and Christian nation owes to these ignorant and benighted people other and higher obligations? To this time only one religious denomination has made any impression upon the islanders. I refer, of course, to the Roman Catholic Church, which in many parts of the archipelago has achieved great success. In so far as any religion exists there at all, this faith is entitled to most of the credit, and I doubt not that it has accomplished great good. The Protestant faith, which largely dominates this country, has not yet gained an appreciable foothold; and it is not likely that during the coming century such another opportunity will be afforded for the extension of Christ's kingdom upon the earth. Christianity demands our retention of the islands. The best reports show that paganism exists in many parts of the archipelago and cannibalism among some of the lower tribes. If we give up these islands to men who themselves know no higher authority than their own passions, can we expect these horrible practices to be abandoned?

But if we retain these islands and establish within their borders peace and order, our noble missionaries who have braved so many perils will, with the great welding power of love, stamp out these evils and bring these degraded people to a high standard of moral worth. So long as we parley here we are keeping these men of God from their duty and are violating the command of the Master to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Look what Christianity has done for Hawaii and Japan! It will do the same for the Philippines. Is it an unreasonable prophecy that, with such a government as we will give these people, in the course of time our Christian men and women will make this archipelago a Christian country, and that it will be heaven's agency, lying close to China, to lead the benighted natives of that densely populated land to an enlightened and purified religion? This is not an idle dream: it is a rational prediction. And we reckon in the light of the guiding hand of the Omnipotent Being who "moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform," this event will follow as surely as the years roll by.

Mr. President, no mention has thus far been made by me as to the value of these possessions and the advantages likely to come to us as the result of our occupancy of the Philippines. Their

retention brings to us, as a return for our tremendous task of civilization and development, many privileges and opportunities of trade. This is preeminently a commercial age. The conflicts of the future will be conflicts for commerce. The progressive nations of the earth are pressing forward and placing their goods in every available market. Shall we alone stand back and see the rest of the world go on? Are we to say to the great business interests of our country that we do not intend to seize these advantages, which will make our nation the queen of the seas? No, ten thousand times no; we will place the name of America in the van of the foremost and our wares shall go to the uttermost parts of the earth.

With the Hawaiian Islands ours, the Philippine Archipelago subject to our dominion and control, and the Nicaragua Canal an assured fact, who can predict as to this nation's commercial future? Our commanding position on the Pacific relative to the trade of the East will be equaled only by the great advantages which we possess on the Atlantic seaboard as to the business of the Western Hemisphere. This fortunate position must be appreciated by all intelligent people, who will, for a moment, reflect upon it. The fact that our shores are washed by the waters of two oceans for thousands of miles, instead of being, as some have thought, a source of weakness, will prove a source of strength.

Many persons oppose the retention of the Philippines, honestly believing that we are wrong and that failure and misfortune must inevitably result. We should not forget that no great end has ever yet been accomplished without encountering the sneers and evil prophecies of many. We can go back as far as the flood to prove the truthfulness of this assertion. Noah was laughed at and thought to be a dreamer and a fool by the wicked of the earth, yet he preserved from extinction all living creatures. Holy Writ abounds with illustrations of like character, and profane history is rich with them. America would not have been discovered in 1492 if Columbus had been daunted by the hisses of the populace. If Fulton, Stevenson, and Morse had listened to direful predictions, the steamboat and the steam engine would never have added their mighty force to the world's great workshop; the telegraphic instrument would never have clicked out its messages; cables

would never have connected far-away lands by almost instantaneous communication; in short, the world would still be almost hidden in darkness. Progress is the order of the day, and enlightened progress at that. We can consistently combine the welfare of the Filipinos with the successful establishment of our commercial supremacy in the East. These islands are about the last left in the Pacific Ocean, and common prudence and ordinary foresight demand their retention.

How could we hope to become the most prominent and potent factor in eastern trade with San Francisco and Honolulu as our nearest ports? We must keep Manila as the door to the vast and undeveloped domain of China. Our foreign trade is growing apace; our exports greatly exceed our imports and are found in every nook and corner of the earth; and we must, in justice to ourselves, be on the alert and never fail to appreciate the great advantages that our favored position gives us. Every material interest, alike of the Filipinos and of the people of this country, demands that we maintain and support the Administration's wise and humane policy as to these islands. We are told that vast and undeveloped wealth lies within their domain, and that the fertility of the soil is unsurpassed. What good, though, will this bring forth if capital can not be secured? With the United States in control capital will be forthcoming to enrich the natives and cause gladness and plenty to crown their labors. But the fertile soil will fail to yield its fruits and these great resources will continue to lie in the bowels of the earth if we foolishly withdraw our sovereignty. According to undisputed reports, the country is rich beyond compute. But what will its riches avail if they can not be utilized for the good of mankind? Every circumstance and every condition demand that we keep control of these islands.

We hear some say that they are too far away from the great body of the United States. So much the better. If they were lying immediately off our coast they would be valueless as a commercial key and from a strategic standpoint. Their immense commercial worth lies in the fact that they guard, so to speak, the entrance to the open gate. But, then, are they so far away, after all? We can communicate with them almost instantly by cable, and steamships plow their way across from San Francisco in thirty

days. In the war with Great Britain in 1812 the decisive battle of New Orleans was fought more than two weeks after the treaty of peace had been signed at Ghent. Now we obtain news of battles in the Philippines immediately after their occurrence. As regards readiness of communication, Manila is nearer Washington than Philadelphia to New York when Jackson fought his way to the White House.

History records the great Napoleon as saying, when he sold the province of Louisiana to the United States, that he had raised up a power that would eventually wrest the scepter of the seas from England. We have now acquired territory which may make this prophecy an assured fact.

Now, Mr. President, much has been and can be said as to what is the best form of government for these new possessions and what should be our future policy in reference to them. No serious contention is made, as I understand, that to the present time we have done aught in this regard other than our duty. No outrage seems yet to have been committed which the most enthusiastic opponent of the President's policy can point out, but it is of the future and of the refusal to declare now and forever that this Government will at some indefinite time surrender its power and control in the Philippines that complaint arises. Why should there be any controversy on this subject? The Administration has not yet failed in its duty in any matter incident to the inauguration or conduct of the war or the proper conclusions of the questions arising therefrom. With singular unanimity it has received the almost undivided support of the American people. It is only on this question of the future, which can not now be definitely decided, that discord and dissension have arisen.

The bill under consideration contemplates giving to those benighted people the best government, republican in form, with the greatest liberty for which they are fitted. No more than this should be done. Pending the establishment of a perfect form and system of self-government they are entitled to and should receive just what the bill provides, viz. maintenance and protection in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property, and religion. They should be accorded these great boons, and no other government than ours can offer them or any of them. My understanding of

the policy of the Administration and of the Republican party is to establish peace and order in the Philippines, give their inhabitants prosperity, peace, and happiness, and at the same time assure to them the largest measure of self-government and local rule that the circumstances and conditions justify, and at the earliest practicable moment.

The Senator who votes against such a policy as this is allying himself with the enemies of his country; he is rashly imperiling her greatness. These islands have been forced on us by the fortunes of war. Our duty to the inhabitants of the archipelago and to other nations, religion, humanity, defense, trade, all demand their retention. To withdraw now would be weakness and cowardice; would be an announcement to the whole world that this Government feels itself unequal to the burden of carrying on to a successful conclusion the work which it has begun in the Philippines. It would be to lose, no doubt forever, the one great opportunity now within our power to elevate the millions of people inhabiting these islands in the scale of civilization and enlightenment and to extend to them the benefits and blessings of our free institutions.

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